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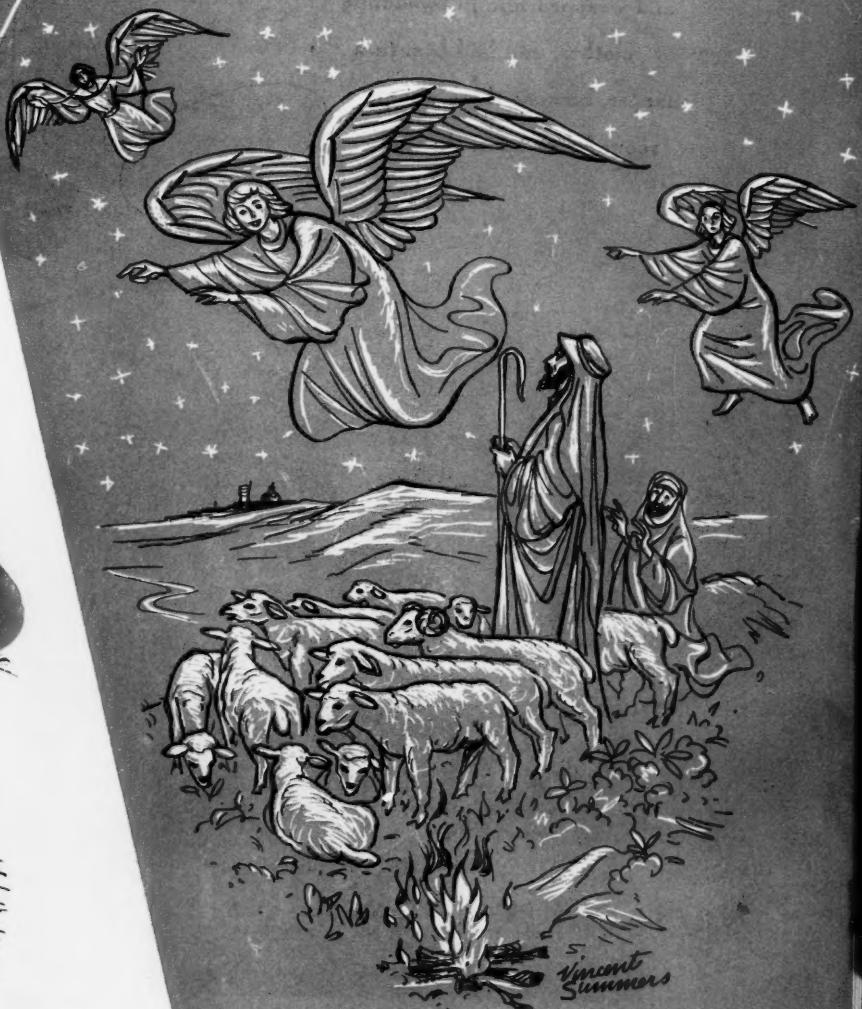
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# America

National Catholic Weekly Review

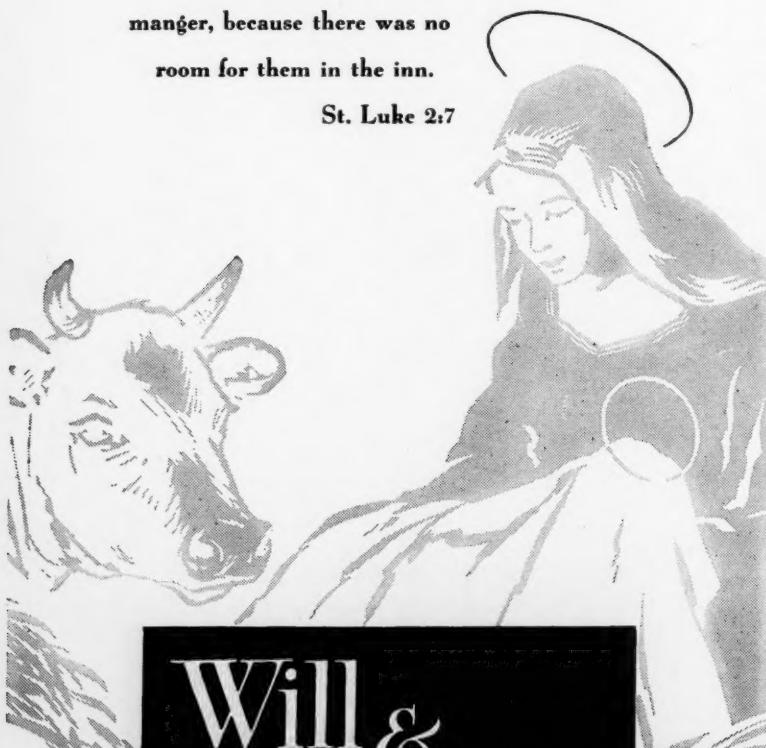
Vol. XCIV No. 13 Whole Number 2432

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*A*nd she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

St. Luke 2:7



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# Correspondence

## Mr. Murphy Replies

**EDITOR:** It is clear from Mr. Connor's letter (AM. 12/17, p. 317) that, typically, he has not read the Special Committee Report on Unesco. That must be so because if he had, then as one bothered by the Eighth Commandment he could not in fairness have omitted reference to a pertinent part of the Report. I refer to the full text of a letter (March 28, 1955) from the Associate Superintendent of Schools of Los Angeles, which, in reference to the pamphlet series "Toward World Understanding," states:

... these pamphlets were not used by teachers and students in the Los Angeles School System.

Mr. Connor's quotation from *The Unesco Story*, published by the U. S. National Commission, is wholly irrelevant. The reason is that my article (AM. 11/26) referred to *that pamphlet series*, and not to the bulletins to which Mr. Connor's quotation refers. Twenty-five per cent of the Report deals with Unesco in the Los Angeles schools as typical of the bitterness of controversy over Unesco in a certain few areas.

If Mr. Connor were to read the Report he would find that the Los Angeles controversy was not played down—rather, it was highlighted—and as to it the Report is absolutely factual. Indeed it is based on the undisputed official record.

Mr. Connor's claim that there are "37 documented misstatements" in the Report derives from the same Los Angeles source that has been in great measure responsible for the false charges against Unesco with which the Report has dealt. The so-called "documentation" ranges from the scandalous and irrational to the ridiculous. This material was patently put together by one who has made a career of attacking Unesco and any and all forms of international cooperation.

In its Report the Special Committee said (p. 10) in reference to the charges against Unesco, that the chore of gathering and summarizing the charges

... has been difficult, almost as difficult as recapturing a bag of feathers loosed in a gale. The charges are seldom specific, are usually emotional and as often mixed and intermingled with other charges against other organizations or movements, frequently the United Nations.

The allegations of so-called "misstatements" are of the common pattern, and like the original charges would take a lot

of words and space in the answering. They serve their author's purpose of obfuscation and confusion among those who will not read the Report nor seek the facts. In good time they will take their ignominious place with their predecessors.

Manhasset, N. Y. RAY MURPHY

## Psychosemantics

**EDITOR:** In John E. Fitzgerald's deft tribute to the late Rev. Alfred J. Barrett, S.J. (AM. 11/26) I note the line "... Nay, not poet, but *communicator*." Let this be your song." This, surely, represents the apotheosis of Sylvester ("Pat") Weaver, new board chairman of NBC.

Ever since 'Omer smote 'is bloomin' lyre, the poet has revelled in being a "maker of things." He used words to in-form the image. In the tortured psychosemanticism of today, however, the *communicator* is king. It seems small praise indeed to the memory of a poet to call him by the niggling name of *communicator*.

Bronx, N. Y. THOMAS F. WELCH

## Teeth on Edge

**EDITOR:** In my opinion it is such biased, "sour grapes" writing as the editorial "No Prosperity for These" (AM. 11/19) that is preventing AMERICA from being the widely read Catholic magazine it could be.

When I subscribed to AMERICA, I wasn't looking for "party line" propaganda. I wanted reporting with a Catholic viewpoint. Please, let's have it. We can get all of the political propaganda from the secular newspapers.

I find it difficult to believe that you would use automobile dealers as an illustration, knowing that all or most of your readers had probably purchased a car since World War II. Such phrases as "families with incomes below \$2,000 had declined only five per cent" might be expected in the logic of the *Daily Worker*.

No matter how it's sliced it comes out the same—"We've never had it so good," low-income groups, auto dealers, farmers, etc.

I'm sorry to say that I'm afraid AMERICA is not going to have it so good unless it sticks to objective Catholic reporting of facts.

E. S. RIGNEY

Stamford, Conn.

All Of Us At  
America

Wish Each One  
Of Our Readers  
And Friends



The  
Peace And Joy  
Of  
Our Blessed Saviour  
At Christmastide  
And Throughout  
The Coming Year

# Current Comment

## THIS HOLY SEASON

### The Cardinal's Christmas

Certain recurring events grow in significance by being no longer news. Such is Cardinal Spellman's annual Christmas visit to the American military installations in the Far East, now in its fourth year.

Thousands of our troops, thousands of their folks at home, and the country in general look forward each season to the recurrence of this act of love and zeal. This time its scope is extended: The Cardinal, leaving here December 16, will visit Korea, Alaska, Japan, Okinawa, Formosa and the Philippines. And he has undertaken it just after returning from a visit to U. S. military installations in Labrador, Greenland, Baffin Island and Newfoundland.

Visits of the Military Vicar of the Armed Forces to the front in time of fighting carry for the popular mind a certain touch of adventure that may seem to be lacking in a period of cold-war inactivity. But the spiritual adventure is all the greater when Christ's messenger carries a gift of light, life and hope to men and women exposed to the demoralizing monotony of peace-time occupation or to lonely watchers at our uttermost outposts. The Cardinal's visit is the clear, warm assurance that the Church Militant, which is the prelude of the Church Triumphant, is a hundred per cent with them in their struggle to preserve their faith and their personal integrity. On our part, we believe that this priestly visitor will carry back home for us some of the joy that the Infant Saviour, through his hands, has communicated to the ends of the earth.

### Watch Those Sisters!

People give gifts at this time of year, inspired by God's gift of His own Son. The Fund for the Advancement of Education may or may not

have been inspired by the season. But its grant last month of \$50,000 for a study of Sister-training methods has won the gratitude of 93,000 teaching nuns in the United States.

Sister Mary Emil of Marygrove College, Monroe, Mich., chairman of the National Sister-Formation Committee, is responsible for the experimental program which attracted the interest of the foundation.

Between now and next June she and her helpers will have gathered data, both here and abroad, for a workshop to be held next summer. Then for three months picked nun-educators from across the country will put their wimples together to charter a pilot course of studies for Sister teacher-training.

For the revised curriculum which will emerge from the work-shop two well-known congregations will serve as pioneer demonstration centers. These are the Sisters of Providence in Seattle and the Sisters of St. Francis of Rochester, Minn.

Leave it to our Sisters to be always on their toes. Not the least complacent with the splendid calibre of pedagogy which, from college to kindergarten, is synonymous with the nuns' teaching, the Sisters are continually assimilating the best in new methods and studies.

### Christmas Prosperity

For the sake of the record, this is the most prosperous Christmas in the nation's history. Should retail sales fail to shatter all previous holiday records, the reason certainly won't be lack of folding money in consumer pocketbooks. On Dec. 7, the Government announced that personal income during October ran at the record annual rate of \$309 billion. Though employment during November did fall 300,000 below October's 65.1 million, more people were gainfully employed last month than dur-

ing any other November in history. In short, if, as we recall the sacred events of the first Christmas eve, we are not the happiest people on earth, the reason must be sought—in most cases, anyway—in other than material causes.

Nor were there any gnawing fears that our prosperity was unsound, or might be shortlived. On the contrary, as the old year dwindled into the new a number of voices were raised predicting another fine year in 1956. That is what Secretary of Commerce Sinclair Weeks firmly and confidently believes. The secretary says, in fact, that during the first quarter of the new year business will run 12 per cent ahead of 1955.

The annual symposium conducted by the U. S. Chamber of Commerce reflected the same kind of optimism. Though the rate of growth is certain to be slower than it was this year, said Emerson P. Schmidt, the Chamber's director of economic research, "next year may well be our best year in history."

We hope that it will be. We also hope that in our prosperity we shall not forget either the 8 million American families with annual incomes below \$2,000, or the tens of millions of foreign families to whom \$2,000 would seem a fortune.

### WIDE WORLD

#### A Yankee Reports on Spain

Ambassadors back for short vacations from foreign posts have a way of saying something warm and friendly about their host countries. But our Ambassador to Spain, John Davis Lodge, gave the Spanish a full-dress tribute Dec. 10 when he addressed the Connecticut Editorial Association in Darien.

Connecticut's former Governor reported favorably on the success of the U. S. military program in Spain, as well as on Spain's "favorable relationships with the Moroccan peoples of North Africa," with Portugal and with her sister-republics in Central and South America.

Other Western powers, said the Ambassador, "as they too become convinced of the real danger of Communist

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imperialism," are gaining greater appreciation of Spain's value in the defense of the West.

Much of Mr. Lodge's address was devoted to the cultural and religious life of Spain. These aspects of Spanish life, he asserted, "have been misunderstood and misrepresented in our country many times over." For too long we have formed our impressions of this "intensely interesting and varied country" from a kaleidoscopic montage of bullfighters, gypsy dancers, mantillas and castanets.

Stressing the "dignified cordiality" he had met everywhere in Spain, Mr. Lodge praised the Spaniard's profound sense of honor and pride. These qualities, he said, are reflected in Spanish dealings with other nations.

All these things needed to be said. Mr. Lodge has authoritatively corrected a host of misrepresentations.

## On Top Down Under

The decision of the conservative coalition to stage an early election paid off as handsomely in Australia as a similar decision did earlier this year in Britain. With 122 voting seats in the powerful House of Representatives at stake, Premier Robert G. Menzies' Liberal-Country party coalition emerged from the balloting with a solid majority that may run as high as 30 or more. Its majority in the dissolved House was only 14.

In calling for elections at this time, Mr. Menzies, like Sir Anthony Eden in Britain, decided to take advantage of two propitious circumstances. The first was the general prosperity in the country, which is showing increasing signs of being menaced by inflation. Better to have the elections now, he reasoned, than to wait until antidotes

had to be applied which, though salutary, always irritate large groups of citizens.

The other development which fairly shouted for elections was the disunity in the ranks of the opposition Labor party. As in Britain, so, too, in Australia, the Labor party is split by a deadly internecine struggle.

The fight came to a climax this year when the Labor party was persuaded to disown its "Industrial Groups." It was these groups, in which Catholics were prominent, that broke the grip which Communists had fastened on many Australian trade unions. Ring-leader of the attack on the Industrial Groups was party leader Herbert Evatt, himself under fire for softness toward Communism. His reckless charge that the Church was plotting to control the Labor party almost certainly contributed to Mr. Menzies' triumph.

## Ford's \$500 Million

The Dec. 13 \$500 million grant by the Ford Foundation to American private colleges and hospitals is a most profoundly significant event. The happily bewildered band of administrators who annually scrape together enough to keep their non-tax-supported schools and hospitals running are in grateful agreement here.

How is this giddy sum to be distributed? \$210 million go to 615 private liberal arts colleges to raise faculty salaries, \$200 million to the nation's 3,500 privately supported hospitals for expansion and research and \$90 million to 42 privately supported medical schools to help strengthen instruction.

Of the sum ticketed for education some \$37 million will accrue to approximately 150 Catholic colleges and universities, in sums varying from Notre Dame's \$2,630,000 to \$59,000 for Salt Lake City's College of St. Mary-of-the-Wasatch. Sixteen Catholic colleges received amounts in excess of \$500,000. In the over-a-million class with Notre Dame are three other Catholic schools: Fordham with \$1,646,500; St. Louis with \$1,512,700; and Marquette with \$1,166,300.

Rev. Edwin A. Quain, S.J., academic vice president of Fordham University, was undoubtedly voicing the sentiments of all educators in private colleges when he told AMERICA:

The grant is the most significant trail-blazing step ever taken by a foundation towards assisting the private college in one of its most pressing responsibilities. It is to be hoped that other foundations, as well as corporations and private individuals, will be stimulated by this to extend a like assistance,

so that the college professor may soon attain an economic position somewhat proportionate to his value and responsibility to society.

The total received by each institution represents the approximate 1954-1955 payroll for instruction in the liberal arts and sciences. The grant is in the form of a ten-year endowment. Only the interest during this period may be used to help increase teacher salaries. At the end of the ten-year period the principal may be used in any way the school chooses.

In addition to its share in the present sum of \$210 million, 126 (including 15 Catholic) colleges will share in a \$50 million "bonus." This will be roughly one-half of the total of last year's faculty salaries and may be used for current expenses. This is given as a reward for "those institutions," to quote the Foundation's statement, "who have led the way in their regions in improving the status and compensation of American college teachers."

New York City's new Deputy Mayor, John J. Theobald, who for six years has been president of Queen's College, made this comment to AMERICA:

As president of a public tax-supported college I look upon the new grant as an exciting move in the right direction. My big fear in looking ahead to the expansion of American higher education is that we may lose the balance between enrolment in public and private institutions.

If that balance is now more assured, we can all thank the Ford Foundation.

NEIL G. MCCLUSKEY

## TV Spreads North

Everyone is beginning to suspect by now that television is here to stay, for better or for worse in sickness and in health. But what a tremendous hold it is taking on the leisure time of people, and consequently what a force it is in our contemporary culture, is nowhere better pointed up than by developments in Canada.

During the past year the number of Canadian TV stations in actual operation has tripled. With a population of only 15.25 millions, Canada has 10 million living within areas covered by TV. Last year 700,000 new sets were sold. Proportionately, this is just about the pace of TV growth in the United States. With ten times the population, we sold last year 7.3 million sets, bringing up to 33 million the number of homes owning sets.

Canadian broadcasting is faced with the problem of having to supply programs in English and French, but the quality of its service remains high. At a recent exhibition of TV programs, held at Columbus, O., Canada submitted her programs for the first time. She captured one first-place award and three honorable mentions.

Speaking at the Canadian National Exhibition at Toronto on Sept. 9, A. Davidson Dunton, Chairman of the Board of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, remarked:

In just three years television has become a major means of communication among Canadians. A large part of the population already receives a very considerable proportion of the impressions coming into their minds by means of television.

There precisely is the promise—and the danger—of TV in Canada and elsewhere.

## GOVERNMENT

### Help Wanted: Vice President

Former President Herbert Hoover's suggestion that Congress create the office of Administrative Vice President may or may not be accepted, but it has to be considered.

Both parties agree that the administrative burden of the President should be lightened, and Mr. Hoover's proposal is the most specific yet offered. It comes, moreover, from a great authority on the operations of the Federal Government. As head of the two Hoover Commissions, Mr. Hoover has just completed eight intensive years of studying and sifting Government organization and efficiency.

In directing the "biggest business in the world," American Presidents have consistently selected some individual whose judgment they respected and allowed him to share the burden of administrative decisions. In the recent past there have been Harry Hopkins and Sherman Adams. Now Mr. Hoover suggests transforming this private arrangement into an official position with clear legal lines of authority. He estimates that "out of the 64 agencies that have to report to the President something like 35 or 40 of them could be placed under an Administrative Vice President."

We hope that Congress will take up this problem in the coming session and that the year ahead will find President Eisenhower again in good health—with all the help he needs to keep him so.

### Atoms for Peace or Death

Children now in our schools will grow up to live a utopian existence in an atomic-powered world—if they live at all. Both nuclear fission reactors for peace and thermonuclear weapons for destruction of the human race are now in production and on planning boards. We cannot, obviously, use both. The struggle between the dream and the nightmare promises to be the most dramatic contest of our lifetime.

John von Neumann of the Atomic Energy Commission has estimated that by 1980 all power (electric, atomic and solar) may be as free as the "unmetered air." But Thomas E. Murray of the same commission has warned the world that nuclear weapons are now "capable of destroying all human life." On top of these statements Defense Secretary Charles E. Wilson on Dec. 10 announced a stepped-up program for intercontinental ballistic missiles

(ICBM: 5,000-mile range) as well as for those of intermediate range (IRBM: 1,000-1,500 miles). As long as Russia produces thermonuclear weapons and experiments with long-range missiles, we have no choice but the dolorous one of "staying ahead."

But winning the arms race offers no solution. The time will soon arrive when either side will be capable of absolute and instantaneous destruction of the other. Life on this planet may soon literally depend on our success in achieving controls and inspection. The public should be kept informed of the progress we make in this vital area. And a steely-eyed world public opinion must be built up against the Russian tyrants who obstruct the paths of peace.

### Keep the Record Straight

There's an organization, with headquarters in Washington, which calls itself "American Coalition." Its purpose is "to coordinate the efforts of patriotic, civic and fraternal societies to keep America American."

One way it proposes to "keep America American" is to show that all opposition to the McCarran-Walter Act (under which present U. S. immigration functions) is inspired and led by Communists and party-liners. Its own release of Nov. 25 harps on this theme and, to bolster this slant, the packet we received includes a reprint of an article by J. B. Matthews in the Oct. *American Mercury*. This splendid example of one-sided journalism ends with the heartening plea: "If Americans mobilize to defend the [McCarran-Walter] Act, . . . the Communists can be defeated."

In all the publicity material of the "American Coalition" there is not one word to the effect that religious groups (the National Catholic Welfare Conference among them), labor organizations (including the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists), senators, Catholic bishops, Protestant ministers and Jewish rabbis have urged repeal of the Act.

Issues must be judged on their merits, not resolved in advance on the grounds that Communists are for or against them.

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## Washington Front

Christmastide inevitably turns men's minds to peace. The story of the birth of the Prince of Peace and the angels' song, "peace to men of good will," are indelibly imprinted on the Western soul.

Yet, tragically enough, the word "peace" in our times has become a fighting word here and abroad. In international and national politics it has become a slogan, a slogan for competition. Five years ago, the USSR outstripped the Western world with its Stockholm pledge for peace, which was signed by millions of well-meaning people. During those years, the U.S.A. was feverishly building military and air bases from Iceland all the way around through Britain, Spain, Morocco, Greece, Turkey, and Pakistan, all capable of delivering missiles with atomic warheads.

It took us some time to wake up to the reality of the Soviet peace campaign (a sad contradiction in terms). Then President Eisenhower, two years ago, at the UN Assembly, launched a new slogan, "atoms for peace," by which was meant atomic reactors all over the world for peaceful power. Meanwhile, the Afro-Asians at Bandung had united for peace, Nehru of India and U Nu of Burma had accepted Red China's Five Principles

for Peace, neutralism between Marxist and Western ideologies had spread from France to the Far East. But Egypt accepted arms from the Red bloc "for peace," and then Israel demanded arms from us for the same laudable purpose. Shooting had gradually become the way to peace, as it had under Wilson in World War I and Roosevelt in World War II. Meanwhile, for a time, it looked as if the United States and the West in general had finally won the peace campaign. Mr. Eisenhower at the first Geneva conference seemed to have won the victory when with great earnestness he persuaded the conferees that the U. S. and the West really mean "peace" when they said it. It was a vain hope. Cold war was soon on again, and the belligerent Khrushchev toured India urging that neutral country to use force against Portugal in Goa and Pakistan in Kashmir.

At the same time, at home, the Republicans adopted as a slogan for 1956 "peace and prosperity," which infuriated the Democrats, who professed to look on the "peace" part of it as a claim that this meant a monopoly for the Republicans and a "smear" on the Democrats as warmongers. So, some of them said, "good-by to the bipartisan foreign policy."

The Prince of Peace himself, however, is still with us forever—He alone owns the word—and we can all sing with the Christmas carol, "the hopes and fears of all our years" will unite us at last in the Little Town of Bethlehem.

WILFRID PARSONS

## Underscorings

►POPE PIUS XII has elevated three North American priests—two from the United States and one from Canada—to the rank of auxiliary bishop. They are Msgr. Philip J. Furlong, pastor of St. Thomas More Church in New York; Msgr. Stephen A. Leven, pastor of St. Francis Xavier Church, Enid, Okla.; and the Rev. Francis Anton Marrocco of Peterborough, Canada.

►TELEVISION FOR THE FAMILY on Christmas Day will be "No Room at the Inn" on NBC at 4 P.M. (EST).

►JOHN CARDINAL D'ALTON, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, will visit this country in April to participate in the dedication of the new Cardinal Glennon Memorial Hospital, St. Louis, Mo.

►FIRST INTEGRATED SCHOOL in South Carolina is St. Anne's parish school, Rock Hill, with 94 pupils. Two of the three teachers are 1955 graduates of Regis College, Weston, Mass., which encourages its graduates to devote a year to teaching in poor parishes.

►A COMMUNICATION from Archbishop Denis E. Hurley of Durban, pays high tribute to James Rogan and his wife Grace, Americans who at the archbishops' invitation went to South Africa to promote the lay apostolate. Mr. Rogan described some of their apostolic enterprises in "The faith at work in South Africa" (AM. 7/9/55). The tribute to Mr. Rogan is by way of a farewell, since he has to return to the United States in the interest of his health.

►BROTHER HUBERT HENRY, S.J., who spent 26 years helping in unseen but valuable ways in the AMERICA editorial office and residence, passed to his reward on Dec. 9 at Guelph, Ont., Canada, at the age of 78. May he rest in peace.

►ST. ANSGAR'S SCANDINAVIAN LEAGUE of New York notes in its November *Bulletin* that 1955 is the eighth centenary of the conversion of Finland to Christianity. In 1155 St. Eric of Sweden brought the faith there. Finland today has 2,108 Catholics in a total population of 4,121,853.

►RHODES SCHOLARSHIPS were granted on Dec. 11 to Donald Sniegowski of the University of Notre Dame and Robert R. Stanton of St. Peter's College, Jersey City, N. J. Last year there were likewise two grantees from Catholic colleges, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, Cal., and The Creighton University, Omaha, Neb. E.K.C.

# Editorials

## *The Crib Reveals Our Worth*

How humble and unobtrusive it all was! A poor carpenter, his young wife on the plodding donkey, companioned perhaps, as Father McCorry suggests in his lovely Christmas meditation, by a devoted servant or friend—these are all the visible characters in the drama, as yet. Quietly they make their way out of the little town, leaving the hurly-burly of meetings and departures behind them, and quietly seek out the stable-cave that had been mentioned to them. And there, when in the fulness of time the main Character enters the scene and the world, all still remained unobtrusive and lowly.

One looking at this scene without the eyes of faith would see nothing worth much. He would see no wealth or worldly station. And yet what our little Divine Lord is telling us as He lies there is precisely a message of worth—His infinite worth, of course, but our own worth, too.

Father Emile Mersch, S.J., meditates beautifully on this fact in his classic, *The Theology of the Mystical Body*:

One of the aims of the Incarnation is to instruct man about the greatness of his dignity. . . . God calls man and enables him to reinstate himself, at the value he has in his own eyes, at the value he sets on himself, and at the same time empowers him to recover his indispensable dignity as a man and a child of God. And God will perform the task with man, raising him up to a life that is the life of God, and inspiring him anew with a transcendence and a supernatural nobility.

This is what the Infant is now doing for and with us, as He lies so apparently helpless and impotent in His Crib.

We have need of this reminder of our "supernatural nobility" in this age of anxieties and fears. Today we seem so horribly dwarfed by the very immensity of the natural forces we have unleashed. They hang in a heavy gloom of destruction over our heads. We have need to study the Infant and Mary and Joseph, and to see, pulsing and shining behind the humble exteriors, the glory and the majesty of the Uncreated Light, so that our littleness may grow great and our weakness strong through Him—yes, this little Infant—who has come to pitch His tent among us. His presence in our midst banishes all our fears. The modern world is full of terrors. But this little One has overcome the world. In Him we can be fearless and at peace.

In Him is our true dignity founded. It is greater by light years than the dignity we possess as those blessed by a democratic way of life. Strange to say, it is only the truly humble who realize the dignity that is theirs. Only they, like Christ's mother, know the magnitude of the "great things" He who is mighty has done, or will do, for them.

The riches of eternity and the little wealth of earth flow together at the Christmas Crib. If we are of little worth in the world's goods, we are infinitely rich through the Infant Christ. The Editors join their pens and their voices to wish you, with fraternal love, a deepening of that Christian nobility wherewith the Infant has dignified all His brothers and sisters.

## *No Colonies for the Church*

Tiny Portugal has had a world-wide influence which belies her size. Of all the European powers which have extended their political control to Asia and Africa during the colonial era, she perhaps merits the least criticism for her policies. Racism has had no part in them. Her rule has been paternal. These are factors which probably explain how Portugal has been able to maintain her overseas possessions intact while the English and French have been pushed out of Asia.

This is no reason, however, to swallow wholesale the condemnation of anti-colonialism which Portuguese Foreign Minister Dr. Paulo Cunha voiced before the National Press Club in Washington last December 5.

To Dr. Cunha the "inflexible anti-colonialist" renders a disservice to the West. He aids the Communist agitator who "wishes nothing better than to remove from the arms of the Western nations the territories and populations which are indispensable to our survival." In other words, Dr. Cunha would appear to make the peoples of Asia and Africa mere cold-war pawns in the hands of the Western powers.

Even were we to grant the validity of the self-interest motive in the West's approach to Asia, Dr. Cunha's assertion raises further questions. Is it the "inflexible anti-colonialist" who has given the Kremlin its golden opportunity throughout Asia? Or is it rather the memory

of three centuries of colonial exploitation which has sparked Asia's revolt from the West and now tempts her to play into the hands of the Communist agitator? With Dr. Cunha we agree that there are such things as "good and bad colonialism." The trouble is that for 300 years most of it has been bad, so bad that it is now too late for the West to retrieve lost ground. Enlightened colonial policies might have saved the day had they been put into practice 50 years ago. Today they will only be swept away in the tide of nationalism which has engulfed Asia. Few today in Asia will discriminate between "good and bad colonialism."

#### WESTERN CIVILIZATION AND THE CHURCH

It may be true that "only under Christian guidance will these peoples reach their political and social maturity." Nevertheless, such statements, when made by a Western political figure, are a handicap to the missionary effort of the Church. They link Christianity with the political expansion of the West. However, as

Père Jean Daniélou, S.J., observes in an article to appear in the January issue of the *Catholic Mind*:

If the time has come for Christianity to express itself in the forms of new civilizations and for the Church to dissociate herself from the tutelage of the West, this must be envisaged as an urgent need, not as an accomplished fact. In reality missionary effort has been too bound up with Western influence. The Christian message has not yet penetrated the great cultures of the East. . . . To them it is a stranger without the doors.

The Church will prove herself an effective guide in Asia only if we, her human members, recall that she is "not bound to any nation or culture" but universal.

No matter how much our political figures may talk of the Christian foundations of our civilization, it is a sad fact that the Western powers have failed to exert a Christian influence throughout Asia. Perhaps only the "inflexible anti-colonialist" is able to read the signs of the times.

## Should We Cut Taxes?

Now that a balanced budget appears to be in sight during fiscal 1956, pressure for a tax reduction, already strong, is becoming almost irresistible. What was merely politically expedient several months ago now seems to be economically justified as well. From the viewpoint of both Republicans and Democrats, of many in Congress as well as in the Administration, a happier set of circumstances could not possibly be imagined.

It should be noted, however, that economists are by no means of one mind about the wisdom of slashing taxes next year. A balanced budget presents other choices besides a tax cut, some of which may well be more conducive than lower taxes to the country's long-term well-being and security.

#### PRO AND CON

This was graphically demonstrated several weeks ago when a subcommittee of the Joint Committee on the Economic Report invited some of the nation's leading economists to present their ideas on tax policy. Of the first six who testified—three from business and three from the academic world—not a single one favored tax reduction in 1956. Some of them thought that any surplus ought to be used to reduce the national debt. Others suggested that the Government increase its non-military spending, especially in such fields as slum clearance, road building and school construction. It was the consensus of the group that cutting taxes now would only add to inflationary pressures. Some day the economy would need a shot in the arm. That would be the time to cut taxes.

The case for tax reduction relies heavily on a reputed need to strengthen both consumer demand and the incentive to invest. In the course of the Washington hearings, for instance, a Dartmouth economist, Prof. Theodore A. Andersen, argued that unless personal income

taxes were cut \$3 billion next year, consumer demand would fail to balance the prospective increase in production. For a similar reason, the Committee for Economic Development also called for lower taxes, especially for lower personal income taxes. A lighter tax burden, it thought, was essential for an expanding economy.

The tax-cutters either do not share the current fears of the Federal Reserve Board that the boom may develop strong inflationary tendencies, or they think that the board, together with other Government agencies, can effectively check these tendencies through their control over the cost and supply of money. The CED spokesman, Frazer B. Wilde, who is also head of the Connecticut General Life Insurance Co., told the congressmen that the danger from inflation at this time is not serious enough to prohibit tax relief. A balanced budget, plus credit controls, is sufficient, he contended, to keep prices in line.

#### OUR DANGEROUS WORLD

In all this discussion, we are surprised that in the wake of the recent disillusionment at Geneva, not to mention the Soviet explosion of a very powerful hydrogen bomb, no one has suggested that any budgetary surplus be devoted to expanding our defense and foreign aid programs. Toward the end of November, the National Planning Association warned that during 1955 the position of the free world had deteriorated and that greater sacrifices were required of it if the mounting challenge of the Communist world was to be successfully met. Until this estimate of recent events is shown to be unduly pessimistic, it might be prudent to keep taxes where they are for a while and use any surplus that develops to strengthen our side in the cold war.



## A CHRISTMAS CONTEMPLATION

Vincent P. McCorry, S.J.

*The first point is to see the persons; that is to say, to see our Lady, and St. Joseph, and the serving maid, also the Infant Jesus, after His birth, accounting myself a poor and unworthy servant, looking at and contemplating them and tending them in their necessities as though I were present there.*

From the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius Loyola.

### I

IT IS DECIDED, THEN. We shall all go to Bethlehem for the census, and not Joseph alone, as he suggested and urged from the outset. Mary has been neither stubborn nor insistent in this matter, for at no time has she ceased to be her serene, smiling self. She is simply clear and sure and definite: we will all go, we will remain together.

Joseph is glad, of course. He sincerely believed that his *precious one* (he does not know I overheard that) should remain here and have the Baby in peace and some security. But, for all his effort to grumble and shake his head, he is happy to think that he will not, after all, be far away when the hour comes. Even when he tries to mutter a few last forebodings, Mary has only to smile at him in that mischievous way of hers, and he starts to grin.

To-day he and I spent some hours in the workshop, rigging up a kind of cushioned saddle, with even a little back-rest, for old Daleth, the gray donkey. How Daleth is going to take to such new-fangled gear, I don't know, for his disposition is uncertain at best. Joseph doesn't know, either, but he just shrugs his shoulders and says that Mary can do anything with the beast.

### II

This morning we tried the new saddle on Daleth, and the comedy deserved a larger, if not a more appreciative audience.

My instructions were to stand at the donkey's head, securely holding the bridle. Obviously, Joseph wanted me out of harm's way, harm's way being at the other end of Daleth. Joseph himself, carrying the saddle, approached from the side, talking steadily and quietly in the immemorial fashion of men trying to reassure a nervous animal. Of course, every time Joseph came near, Daleth sidled away; we all described several complete circles in this style.

It was impossible not to laugh. Even poor Joseph, after one desperate and almost disastrous lunge, was grinning widely as he put down the gear and mopped his brow with a sleeve.

At that moment Mary stepped out the back door of the house, I had the distinct impression that she had been laughing, but, without a word, she stood quite strictly still and looked straight at Daleth. I know it will not be credited, but that donkey hung his head, looking guilty as sin. Joseph walked over and put the saddle on him. He flicked his ears, but never moved otherwise.

So it seems we are ready to go.

### III

The first day on the road is over, and we are grateful to God for uneventful travel without mishap, though I can see that Joseph is counting the miles and the three long days still ahead of us.

Mary was a superb traveler. Generally I led the donkey, with Joseph trudging alongside the beast, so that he could watch his wife, and talk to her. I could not always hear them, for they usually spoke in low tones, but all that I heard was typical. Joseph was solicitous and Mary was brightly minimizing both present inconveniences and future complications. Once I did hear her say: "Beloved, we have nothing to worry about. We have Him."

Sometimes, though, Joseph would lead the animal. Then I would drop back and talk to Mary. She was wonderful to me.

• • •

Now it is night, and we have camped. The stars wheel overhead, and I hear Joseph stir as a jackal howls far off. Mary, under the warm blanket which her husband puts over her, sleeps as quietly as any child. Those bright stars! They had better hoard their brilliance, for they will have to blaze like jewels one of these nights. Their Fashioner must not be without welcome of some sort.

*Now it came to pass in those days, that there went forth a decree from Caesar Augustus that a census of the whole world should be taken. This first census took place while Cyrinus was governor of Syria. And all were going, each to his own town, to register.*

*And Joseph also went from Galilee out of the town of Nazareth into Judea to the town of David, which is called Bethlehem—because he was of the house and family of David—to register, together with Mary his espoused wife, who was with child. And it came to pass while they were there, that the days for her to be delivered were fulfilled. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn* (St. Luke 2:1-8).

#### IV

The morning sun begins to melt the hard chill of dawn, and soon we will be on the road. This is the fourth and last day, thank God. Everyone is cheerful, and Mary, at least, is as serene as ever, but Joseph and I simply can't pretend to be blind. Mary is *tired*. She is paler than she was, she does not move about as easily, and last evening she ate practically nothing.

Joseph is worried, but says that we will be in Bethlehem before sundown. He told me under last night's stars that, if it takes his last penny, Mary tonight will have the softest bed in Bethlehem. I agreed, of course, and said nothing further.

But good Joseph has been so preoccupied with his young wife that he hasn't particularly noticed how many other people are headed in the same direction as ourselves. I hate to think it, but there may be considerable demand for beds, soft or not, in David's town this night.

In God's name, then, we turn Daleth's gray head to the south and enter upon the last stage of a rough, trying journey. It will be good to sleep under any roof tonight.

#### V

Things are far worse than anyone could have dreamed.

Already it is almost dark, and I am standing in the

darker shadow of the inn wall, holding Daleth's bridle. There's no need, really; the poor beast is too exhausted to budge. I watch Mary out of the corner of my eye, afraid almost to move, lest she stir and perhaps fall. For the first time she droops, poor girl. She sits in leaden weariness on the patient donkey's back. Joseph has gone to make one last despairing effort with the innkeeper, a lean, harried man, kindly enough, but frantically lost in an unheard-of avalanche of beasts and people.

Joseph is coming now, and I can tell how it is. No room, of course. But, dear God, what are we going to do?

Joseph, himself gray with weariness, stands and speaks to us quietly and clearly. He says that he remembers, now, how along the hillside outside the town there are limestone caves. They will make fair shelter, at least for the present. While he talks, I watch his face, rather than listen to his words. I had no idea what husbands, and young fathers, must sometimes go through. Not that they care a fig for themselves. That's just the point.

Mary is saying, almost dreamily: "But Joseph, that will be splendid."

So we turn, and lead poor Daleth, and Daleth's precious burden, out of Bethlehem town.

I realized only later that Bethlehem town simply didn't deserve what God offered.

#### VI

We are settled down. Our place is something, but, in all truth, not much. It's probably a *little* warmer in here than outside. The only light comes from Joseph's lantern, but perhaps it is as well, because I am inclined to think that on any kind of inspection this hut-cave would prove to be not especially clean.

Mary took only a mouthful of bread and a little watered wine before she lay down. She is very pale; like finest alabaster, I thought: almost transparent, but somehow glowing from within. Joseph had just put the blanket over her, when she said very softly, pointing, "Beloved, what is that?"

Joseph squinted in the poor light, then said, "That's a manger, precious one."

And then Mary gave a little sigh of contentment and said oddly, "Oh. I'm glad."

Joseph and I walked out to the rude entrance to the cave. For a little while we stood there, watching the lights wink out down in Bethlehem, watching the sharp, glowing stars overhead.

Suddenly the carpenter of Nazareth said, very low: "She is the finest person God ever made."

I could only say: "Joseph, I know. I know."

#### VII

*Adeste, Fideles, Laeti Triumphant,*  
*Venite, Venite in Bethlehem.*  
*Natum Videte, Regem Angelorum,*  
*Venite, Adoremus,*  
*Venite, Adoremus,*  
*Venite, Adoremus Dominum!*

# The Middle East is NOT FOR POLITICS

Vincent S. Kearney

CHRISTMAS, 1955, finds the Holy Land further away from peace than at any time in the past seven years of Arab-Israeli tensions. The increase of deplorable border incidents probably will not develop into full-scale combat. Yet, the possible renewal of outright war between these Middle Eastern antagonists is not the only worry that has come to plague the free world. Russia has made her strongest bid for a voice in the affairs of the Middle East since the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939 recognized the area as a Soviet sphere of influence. By offering Egypt the arms that country has sought so desperately and wooing her with promises of long-range economic and technical assistance, the Soviets threaten to emerge as a factor in Middle Eastern power politics. The area that witnessed the birth of the Prince of Peace 19 centuries ago may soon become another testing ground in the bitter cold-war struggle.

## "NORTHERN TIER"

The area is not yet lost to the West. Whether or not it will be depends on how quickly Washington and London counter the clever diplomatic play of the Soviet Union. Systems of military containment alone

will not work. Soviet interference in the Middle East has taken place in spite of the newest of the free world's system of defense alliances. It is now obvious that the Middle East Treaty Organization (Meto), the anti-Communist defense pact which binds the region's "northern tier" states of Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Pakistan to Britain, may be incapable

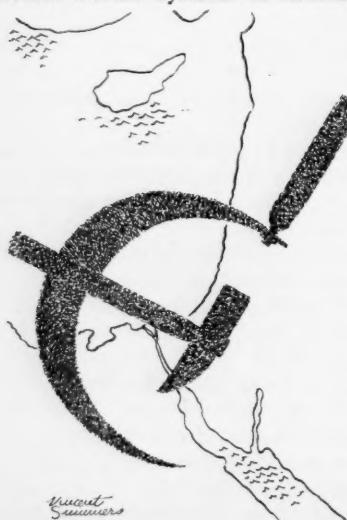
of keeping the highly strategic Middle East free of Soviet penetration.

Recriminations about past Western policy in the Middle East will solve nothing. Nevertheless, a realistic approach to the problem presented by Soviet intervention in the Arab-Israeli conflict demands at least a recognition of past mistakes. The impending formation of the Meto alliance may have spurred Russia on to greater diplomatic activity in the area south of the "northern tier." Yet, it has been the West's dubious policy of keeping a so-called "balance of power" between the Arab States and Israel that gave the Soviets their golden opportunity. That policy has kept Israel with her population of one million better armed than the 40 million Arabs who are just as fearful of Israeli expansion as is Israel of the intemperate Arab threats to "drive Israel into the sea." Russia has simply chosen this moment to capitalize on Arab fears.

Anyone familiar with the long history of Arab-Jewish tensions in Palestine during the period of the British mandate could have predicted the inevitable conflict in the Middle East which followed upon the creation of the Zionist state. There were prophetic voices in the United States. Yet, despite their clear warning against yielding to the pressure exerted by minority voting groups in this country, we not only helped push through the ill-advised UN plan for the partition of Palestine but also considered ourselves morally responsible for the subsequent growth, development and protection of the state of Israel.

## THE WARNINGS

The late Secretary of Defense, James V. Forrestal, recounts in his *Diaries* (Viking Press, 1951) how Under Secretary of State Robert A. Lovett confessed to him that "never in his life had he been subjected to as much pressure [from Zionist propagandists] as he had been in the three days" the UN General Assembly was debating the partition plan for Palestine. As for Mr. Forrestal himself, he was convinced that the Palestine issue should have been taken out of domestic politics and viewed in the light of U. S. security interests. In an entry dated February 3, 1948 he stated:



I replied [to Franklin D. Roosevelt Jr.] that I had no power to make policy but that I would be derelict in my duty if I did not point out what I thought would be the consequences of any policy which would endanger the security of this country. I said that I was merely directing my efforts to lifting the question out of politics, that is, to have the two parties agree they would not compete for votes on this [the Palestine] issue. He said this was impossible, that the nation was too far committed and that, furthermore, the Democratic party would be bound to lose and the Republicans gain by such an agreement. I said I was forced to repeat to him what I had said to Senator McGrath in response to the latter's observation that our failure to go along with the Zionists might lose the States of New York, Pennsylvania and California—that I thought it was about time that somebody should pay some consideration to whether we might lose the United States.

This deep-rooted concern lest American influence be snuffed out throughout the Arab world involved Mr. Forrestal in more criticism than any of his actions during nine years of service in the Government.

#### ANGLO-AMERICAN REPORT ON PALESTINE

Our decision to support the partition of Palestine appears all the more reckless in view of the conclusions reached by a team of investigators chosen by our own Government and working in close collaboration with the British almost two years previous to the entry in the *Forrestal Diaries*.

On April 20, 1946 the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry Regarding the Problems of European Jewry and Palestine submitted its report to Washington and London. The committee had not only explored conditions in Palestine but had conducted a thorough on-the-spot investigation of the tragic plight of the Jewish refugees in Europe. The fourth of the report's ten recommendations reads:

We have reached the conclusion that the hostility between Jews and Arabs and, in particular, the determination of each to achieve domination, if necessary by violence, make it almost certain that, now and for some time to come, any attempt to establish either an independent Palestinian state or independent Palestinian states would result in civil strife such as might threaten the peace of the world. We therefore recommend that, until this hostility disappears, the Government of Palestine be continued as at present under a mandate, pending the execution of a trusteeship agreement under the United Nations (emphasis added).

Adverting to an earlier report by a British Partition Committee, the Anglo-American Committee commented:

We have considered the matter anew and we have heard the views of various witnesses of great experience. Partition has an appeal at first sight as giving a prospect of early independence to Jews and Arabs but, in our view, no partition would have any chance unless it was basically acceptable

to Jews and Arabs, and there is no sign of that today. We are accordingly unable to recommend partition as the solution (emphasis added).

The Palestine war and seven years of unabated tension in the Holy Land have demonstrated the wisdom of the Anglo-American Committee's report. That the U. S. Government should have forgotten it so quickly and allowed the pressure of domestic politics to determine our pro-Zionist policy toward Palestine was the tragic mistake in our relations with the Middle East. With Russian intervention in the Middle East the Arab world is now in a position to exact payment in full.

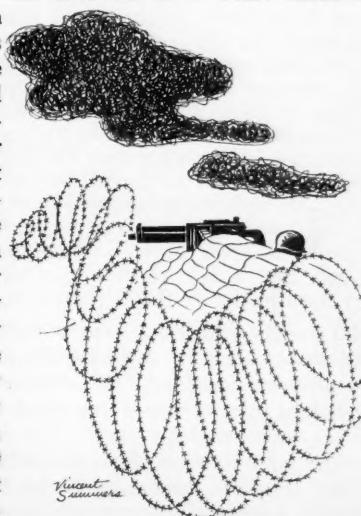
#### NEW ZIONIST PRESSURE

Moreover, the mistake was one from which an extremely vocal segment of the American population still appears unable or unwilling to profit. Since the Czech-Egyptian arms deal, the vote-getters and the pro-Zionist propagandists have been again on the move advocating that we conclude a mutual-security agreement with Israel and spark a Middle East arms race by matching, with Israel, the Soviet offer of arms to Egypt. The propaganda is based on two false premises: 1) that there has been a balance of power in the Middle East which the Czech-Egyptian arms deal immediately threatens; 2) that Israel alone has been the victim of intemperate threats and therefore merits immediate proof of American sympathies.

#### THE BALANCE OF POWER

There is not today and there never has been a balance of power in the Middle East in the sense that both sides in the Arab-Israeli conflict have equal military strength. Not only is Israel militarily superior to Egypt, but she is stronger than the combined forces of Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq. Only one Arab army can compare favorably with Israel's—the Arab Legion of Jordan, which numbers some 18,000 men.

Israel, on the other hand, has from 50,000 to 75,000 men under arms. In addition to a small cadre of regulars, all men between the ages of 18 and 29 are drafted for two and a half years of military service. After service, all except the professional cadre enter into the reserve, take a month of refresher training annually and are liable for service up to the age of 49. In a few days the country can mobilize an army of 200,000 men, a force that would give her nu-



merical superiority over the combined armies of the Arab nations.

Increased arms aid to the Arab nations above the limits set down by the Tripartite Agreement of 1951 between Britain, France and the United States, which had as its purpose the rationing of arms to the Middle East, would, it is true, neutralize in time the advantage Israel now enjoys. Yet, as Hanson Baldwin, the noted military commentator, pointed out in his New York *Times* column on November 11, "equipment is only one element—and by no means the most important element—of military strength." It takes time to deliver it and even longer to train men to use it effectively. There is therefore no need to become hysterical over an imminent and dramatic shift in the Middle East balance of power. Arab military strength will remain inferior to Israel's for some time to come.

Moreover, there are those within Israel who are by no means convinced that war between Israel and Egypt is unavoidable, even in view of the Russian attempt to start an arms race. Dr. Herzl Berger, Mapai party leader, noted in the October 25 Tel Aviv daily, *Letzte Naises*:

Hysteria, particularly mass hysteria, is a poor and dangerous counselor in critical situations. . . There can be no doubt that (as far as the present situation is concerned) there is no reason for the hysteria which has made its appearance in certain sections of our society. . . Even if Egypt were to receive all the Soviet tanks, airplanes and cannon, considerable time would pass before she can build up and prepare an army that not only possesses modern weapons but knows how to use them.

Israeli fears of Arab aggression no doubt exist, but can it be said that Israel is wholly free of blame in keeping alive Arab antagonism? As the Tel Aviv *Lebensfragen*, organ of the Jewish Labor Bund, quoted in the November 21 *Jewish Newsletter*, editorialized in its November issue:

Let us not forget that the policy of the State of Israel is largely responsible for the present rush of Egypt after Soviet arms. For years we have boasted to the entire world that we have the strongest army in the Middle East, that our army is stronger than all the Arab armies together. We have translated these words into acts like Kibya, Gaza and others, where we have shown with deeds that we are stronger than the Arabs. How can we raise objection to Egypt because she decides to answer with an attempt to strengthen her army? And have not our "activists," with their cries of preventive war, of the occupation of the Gaza strip and the march to the historic frontiers, given reason to Nasser for increasing his arms?

The threats emanating from the Middle East throughout seven years of Arab-Israeli tensions have by no means been one-sided. We would do well to look closely before leaping into a one-sided Middle East policy in the present crisis.

One consideration alone must determine what that policy is to be—the design of the Soviet Union in the Middle East and its possible consequences for free-

world security. Expanding Soviet influence in the area is not the result of a new "post-Geneva" look in the Kremlin. Czarist Russia long had its eyes on the Middle East. So, too, have the Soviets, as the outrageous Hitler-Stalin pact of 1939 and its apportionment of spoils in the event of a Nazi World War II victory indicated. It should therefore come as no surprise that Russia has taken advantage of Arab bitterness over Western support of Israel to vault into Egypt over the free world's defense pacts along the "northern tier" of Middle Eastern states and to appear as friend and sympathizer of the Arab world. The Russian move can be countered only with well-thought-out diplomacy on our part.

#### TOWARD AN AMERICAN POLICY

Only a permanent peace settlement between Arabs and Israelis will give us a fighting chance to keep Russia out of the Middle East. But if we expect to take the lead in bringing Arab and Israeli to the conference table, we must recognize several imperatives.

1. The Arab-Israeli dispute must be taken out of domestic politics. Israel will not talk peace as long as she has reason to count on American support for whatever policy she adopts toward the Arab world. Nor will the Arab nations, as long as they can rely on Britain's pro-Arab sympathies. The time has come to make it clear to Israel, the Arab nations and Great Britain that our guiding concern in our efforts to bring peace to the Middle East is national and free-world security and not the interests of a minority voting group in the United States. We cannot afford to be panicked into contributing to an arms race nor, what is worse, pressured into concluding a security pact with Israel which could only be interpreted as anti-Arab in intent.

2. We should put teeth into the Anglo-French-American agreement of 1951, which guaranteed the frontiers of the Middle East against any forcible attempt to change them, by promising explicit sanctions against the guilty party in the event of a renewal of the Palestine war.

3. We should exert all our diplomatic finesse in getting both parties to talk compromise and peace.

4. Russia's aim in the Middle East is long-term. We would do well to look beyond the peace we hope to achieve and begin laying our own long-range plans for economic and technical assistance in the area, the resettlement of the Arab refugees and the working out of a regional security system which would not only satisfy the antagonists in the Middle East but raise their sights a little higher to the problem of Red penetration.

There is very little time to lose. With the 1956 election campaign looming on the horizon, the politicians, both Republican and Democrat, if they yield to the usual temptation, will be thinking in terms of vote-getting. Russia, however, has no such concern. She is not out for votes but for Middle East oil, the strategic air and sea lanes of the area and the gateway to the vast continent of Africa. With the stakes so high, the fear of losing a few votes in a Presidential year becomes a forbiddingly expensive luxury.



## Children of Light

In sun I sing to make the meaning clear,  
Telling you plainly what your heart must hear:  
Dark is a distance, light is to be near.

You walked an exile in a place of fear,  
In nightfall's kingdom, but now day is here.  
I tell you simply that you need not fear.

Not by our doing did that light appear,  
Then we were strangers, then we were not near,  
Light was a distance, dark was to be here.

Not by our doing will day disappear,  
Darkness of ours can never interfere.  
I tell you simply that the light is here.

I tell you plainly what you must not fear,  
Singing in sun to make the meaning clear:  
Dark is a distance, light is to be near.

JAMES F. COTTER

## This Light

Light, with a thousand carolings, pours down, floods  
down  
Flood-tides through tall feminine birch and brooding  
balsam:

Light chalices the engoldened leaves  
Engraves fern-grace with a winnowing ray, timber  
silent;  
Glories the wild azalea weaving purple grace  
beside a mountain stream:  
Ennobles grey stone to fortress of proud masonry  
A gay and impossible blossoming of winter rock:  
A granite resonance through greyfriar dawning  
A stern and priestly matin in the morning's reveling.

At the appointed hour of youth and morning  
Light, cool, clear, exultant  
creates the distant gold of fern.

## In The World-Crowded Corner of a Stall

In the beginning was the Word  
When no lips shaped the burning desire,  
Nor sang the bird  
Or poet with heart of fire.

In the beginning was the Light  
When no minds rose from the gloom of doubt,  
Nor skies flashed white  
And gold and put black clouds to rout.

But when the time was ripe to mold  
Into a convex heart the world's concave,  
The Word took hold  
Of the lowly form of slave.

Nor would the Light concede that space  
Could dictate bounds to supercosmic scope  
When maiden grace  
Ushered to the earth despair's sole hope.

And the Word and the Light found room  
In the world-crowded corner of a stall  
Where eyes pierced gloom,  
Hearts felt fire—and a Child was all.

ROBERT O'CONNELL

In the velvet shadow of the wood  
it wavers, enticing an unknown child's  
love of gold and glade.

Light, following the ritual of days  
a woman, absorbing and transmitting:

A white shutter opening  
on the primordial weave and wave  
of sea ferns on the ocean floor.

Light—an idea that is willed  
clear and ample like the green field,  
the harvest in the time of unfolding.

"*Since God is Light . . .*"  
This light, symbol of the Light:  
Countless carolings await its hour of decision.  
Light, entirely self-giving . . .

the forever present, the forever new:  
Light that guides the wayward seed  
the patient perfection of the leaf,  
the birth and the renewal.

W. J. GRACE

## Come Home

After Midnight Mass there it was cold.  
The classic wind blew shrewdly through the door;  
And the soup was hot enough to hold;  
There were even snowflakes on the floor.  
It was all that Christmas should have been—  
Dickens—not Matthew, Luke or John—  
And there was smoking-bishop for all men  
And good-will, too, rose up like dawn.

What are we doing in this Bracebridge Hall  
Eating goose instead of broken Bread,  
But fleeing from the freezing, blinding stall  
We saw at Mass, before we rose and fled?  
Come home, my dear, come home. Tomorrow-day  
Stephen's blood will burst for this, and spray.

LEONARD McCARTHY

## Contentment

Come in. Do come in. This is contentment here—  
The self-same peace that Mary knew bending above  
her Child—  
No backward looking and no forward, but a calm  
That is the complement of prophecy, of love, of  
all desire—  
The stillness of the heart that knows God is enough.  
We have our Christmases. Today is mine.  
Come in. Do, do come in. Let Mary tuck you in  
contentment  
As mothers fold their children in to sleep.

SISTER M. DAVIDA, I.H.M.

## Priest on Protestants and Unity

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By George H. Tavard, A.A. Harper. 160p.  
\$2.30

Are Catholics and Protestants in this country to settle down to a sort of cold war, in which each side will register spiritual progress only through conversions or defections from one religion to the other? In other words, can the term "ecumenism" convey any practical meaning acceptable to Catholics and Protestants alike?

Roughly, ecumenism may be defined as a movement toward unity between the various elements which profess a Christian faith. More precisely, in the language of the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, ecumenism is "that quality or attitude which expresses the consciousness of and desire for Christian unity."

To the first of these questions, Father Tavard, of the Fathers of the Assumption, opposes a definite No, in this English version of his original French *la rencontre du Protestantisme*. He answers the second question by a distinctly hopeful, although sharply realistic Yes. Speaking as a Catholic theologian, he believes that Catholics cannot be satisfied with a purely negative and defensive attitude toward Protestantism, but that a certain positive approach is necessary.

Such an approach will impel us to keep restating our faith in terms more intelligible to non-Catholics, and to strive more fully to understand the more profound and noble elements, such as they are, in Protestant religious experience. In common with other Catholic theologians who in recent times have given special attention to this question, he believes that it is quite possible to discern certain common ideas—not

of a merely anti-Roman character—amid the numberless variations of current Protestant denominations. The author's attitude is briefly summarized in the following:

The Reformation is not—as too many believe who are not conversant with its doctrine and mentality—a denial of Christianity; it is a biased interpretation of the faith. When we lump together Protestant and unbeliever, we spirit away the problem of Protestantism; but suppression is never a solution . . . And this leads to a disastrous consequence for the catholicity of our thought . . . The drama of Protestantism is that of the 2,000,000 Christians—or approximately so—who adhere to the theology of the Reformation. This raises a rather serious religious problem. For those millions of Christians undergo an actual, though slanted, experience of faith of which we do not partake and

## The Christmas Harvest

Now in the wake of the windy sun  
I would gather God's gear,  
Reaping the riotous ripeness  
Of the heaven-fallen harvest,  
And here hold fast  
In the clench of my keepsake hand  
God's golden explosion  
In the loud leaf of love.

I would crush fruit to juice  
In the jaws of the joy-making mouth  
Melting with muchness  
Too great to savor  
In the taste of time untold,  
In the only tower where time begins  
And the bells tolling down  
To the warm waking hearth—

Halt here this waterfall waste  
Spilling such richness to spare,  
Come gather from crackling of frost  
Good straw for care of the crib,  
Now wimpled in the warmth  
Of the winter-born Christ—  
And the cold no longer cold  
But gleaming like roses on fire!

THOMAS P. McDONNELL

which is nonetheless real. . . . The problem seems therefore to consist in acquiring a sufficient acquaintance with the theology of the Reformation by discerning its human and Christian undertones without renouncing an iota of the spiritual, intellectual and moral implications of the Catholic Faith.

Bearing on this thesis, the author discusses frankly, trenchantly, various early (16th- and 17th-century), later and present approaches to our separated brethren. Many of his strictures are obvious, and would be accepted as such by leading Catholic theologians today. Few would quarrel with his insistence that the Reformation must be judged on the historical background of the 16th century, as an event conditioned by the decay of Christendom at the time.

But Fr. Tavard may be reading a 20th-century background around a 16th-century meeting when he conjectures that a more conciliatory attitude on the part of Father James Lainez, S.J., at the Colloquy of Poissy, would have resulted in a theological pacification. Lainez, a remarkable thinker and a temperate man, won high praise from the Catholic bishops for his 45-minute speech in contrast to the long harangues of Beza, Peter Martyr and other speakers.

Father Tavard is careful to dissociate his ideas from the fatuous "false irenicism" condemned by Pope Pius XII in the Encyclical *Humani Generis*, while at the same time he militantly polemizes against what he considers an unduly cautious and restricted approach to the problem on the part of certain Catholic theologians and reads a lecture to American Catholics, clergy and laity, for their alleged backwardness and dereliction of duty.

As for the Protestant side of the picture, the author is equally bold in denouncing erroneous attitudes and in exposing what he estimates as the basic Protestant "dilemma"—the problem of an essentially ambiguous terminology.

Is this proposed program of mutual respect, understanding and exchange of views really practical? European Catholics are not always alive to the subtler aspects of the Church's situation in this country; such as Protestantism's entrenched social status, and the problems created by persistent aspersions of certain Protestant groups upon our religious schools, the calumnies of the P.O.A.U. and a Paul Blanshard, the fanaticism of some of the missionary

sects, the pervasive climate of indifference, and the historical Protestant fears of Roman political domination. Profound disagreements on matters of family morals and matrimony seem to raise impassable obstacles.

Yet humble love and earnest prayer can bridge many an abyss. The Church,

says Fr. Tavard, needs more apostles and theologians of church unity. His provocative and ably written little book, despite the rather querulous tone of some of its various admonitions, may move us to do more praying, studying and thinking.

JOHN LAFARGE, S.J.

## Suspense and Allegory

### AN EPISODE OF SPARROWS

By Rumer Godden. Viking. 247p. \$3.50

"A molehill can be a mountain to a sparrow." It was Olivia Chesney speaking to Angela, her busily efficient sister; and the sparrows were the children who lived in London, in Catford Street which lay in all its shabbiness right behind the property of Mortimer Square. The Garden Committee of the Square, with Angela as its most forceful member, had been outraged at the theft of some earth from the Gardens. The Street children were suspected—and there is the skeleton of this enchanting novel.



From the upper windows, Olivia liked to look down at the bustle and excitement of the Street. She could see Sparkey sitting bundled up against the March wind, waiting while his mother sold newspapers; and Tip, or any one of the numerous and noisy Malones; and the little girls from St. Botolph's Home of Compassion, walking two-by-two; and maybe Father Lambert standing near the ruins of his bombed-out church; and Vincent, the restaurant keeper who dreamed of the day when *real* people would discover his exquisite

cooking even in a place like Catford Street. But she could not see what was going on in the mind of Lovejoy Mason, an eleven-year-old girl who lived with Vincent Combie and his wife.

Lovejoy's mother was a music-hall singer; indeed, Lovejoy had performed with her for a time and retained a certain precocity and concern for appearances that set her apart from the other children on the Street. But these touches of maturity did little to allay the distress caused by Mrs. Mason's extended absences, her failure to provide money, her peculiar behavior when she finally arrived at Catford Street.

In her unhappiness, Lovejoy knew one certainty: more than anything in this world she wanted a garden; she wanted to plant flowers and watch them grow. When she snatched a packet of cornflower seeds from Sparkey, her desire became a state of complete dedication. Manners, morals and the paved areas of the crowded Street were nothing but challenges to be met and overcome.

Vincent was right when he said that nothing is just itself. Before long, Lovejoy had involved Mr. Isbister who had a barrel garden; Tip Malone and his gang; the candle money in the Catholic church and the statue of Mary which seemed to keep looking at a person; Father Lambert who saw more than he let on; Lucas, the gardener for Mortimer Square; the Juvenile Court; the Admiral, Angela, and, most of all, Olivia Chesney.

Rumer Godden has written a delightful book which you may read as a suspenseful novel and also as a kind of allegory. It is poetic and realistic, tender and wisely humorous, simplicity itself, yet charged with the clashes of material and spiritual values. And besides, no one should miss the opportunity of knowing Lovejoy Mason.

MARY STACK McNIFF

## Portraits from the Bible — Portraits on a Wall

### A PORTRAIT OF SAINT LUKE

By A. H. N. Green-Armitage. Regnery.  
204p. \$8

### WOMEN OF THE BIBLE

By Michael Cardinal von Faulhaber.  
Newman. 248p. \$3.50

Information about Saint Luke is scant. Three times he is mentioned by name in the New Testament. His two books are written with modest impersonality. Profane sources are silent. Can this true portrait be limned? Can it possess that vital quality which we have the right to demand?

Surprisingly enough the answer to both questions is Yes. Mr. Green-Armitage's technique is original. With delicate perceptiveness and disarming erudition he lingers over every clue in the New Testament, he sifts every affirmation and omission in the Third Gospel and in the Acts, he marshals much relevant information from an impressive familiarity with the Greco-Roman world of the first century, and so effectively combines his findings that the figure of Saint Luke, the man and the author, emerges, clearly etched against a singularly rich background.

This portrait is in Velasquez's early manner. Piece by piece the parts are assembled—historical setting, an analysis of the *Acts*, Luke's relations with Paul, a study of Luke's Gospel, Luke's contacts with Mark, Christianity as Luke understood it and a final leisurely conclusion. Throughout this genial

study there are no violent contrasts of light and shadow; each part is drawn with equal clarity. Monsignor Ronald Knox has written an enthusiastic introduction for his friend's book. The introduction, besides being brilliant, is also well-deserved.

Archbishop Goodier performs a similar service for Cardinal Faulhaber's *Women of the Bible*. The tone of this introduction and this book is one of grave dignity. These portraits are the work of a serious craftsman who, like some old Dutch master, reveals the extent of his knowledge and the depth of his insight into human nature. The valiant women, Rachel, Miriam, Debora and many other minor figures of the Old and New Testaments are faithfully portrayed. Merely to introduce his characters, however, is not the author's chief purpose.

He is concerned about the woman of today. Example, to him, is more effective than precept. The valiant woman is shown to be the ideal mother, Rachel is the perfect wife, Miriam is a well-loved sister, and Debora is like the Judiths and the Esthers of every age who have the interests of their people at heart.

These books are scholarly but they are not written for the scholar. In their pages the alert Catholic can increase his knowledge of the Bible. There is a growing demand for such books, and these two meet the need splendidly.

KATHRYN SULLIVAN

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### ON THE TRACK OF PREHISTORIC MAN

By Herbert Kuhn. Random House. 208p.  
\$3.95

The long-hidden talent of the Ice Age cave-dwellers is seen in their own beautifully detailed paintings of their hunting triumphs over bison, stag and mammoth. Prof. Kuhn's popular account of his speleal explorations brings to light the timeless artistry of paintings over 20,000 years old, found in prehistoric caves of Spain and France.

Dr. Kuhn, internationally recognized expert of early cave art, guides the fascinated reader through twelve famous natural galleries of cave art. Vivid description, colored by a warm emotional expression, conveys the author's sense of awe in the presence of these picture-treasures from the earliest days of man.

In November of 1879 the five-year-old daughter of Don de Sautuola was playing in the cave at Altamira in Spain. The flickering light of the candle revealed several large, beautifully pigmented paintings on the cave roof.

Fortunately, Altamira was to be not only the first but also the finest and one of the largest of these cave galleries. (Prof. Kuhn calls this the Sistine Chapel of the Caves). Since then, 106 other caves have been found with prehistoric paintings of varying complexity—from the earliest Aurignacian (25,000 years old) to the more intricate Azilian of a later period.

Eighty-five selected illustrations bring the reader closer to the reindeer hunters and subterranean artists. Prof. Kuhn, who is dean of pre- and protohistory at the University of Mainz, points out the evolution of these Ice Age paintings. In most of the caves the artistry is amazing; perspective, coloring and detail on rugged walls are astonishingly "modern." In fact, when the beautiful Altamira paintings were examined, scientists thought for 24 years that they were the hoax of a modern painter.

The expert will, of course, already be familiar with the definitive work of the great pioneer French paleontologist Abbe Henri Breuil, *Four Hundred Centuries of Cave Art*. That classic finds a fascinating abridgement and popularization in Dr. Kuhn's description of the oldest paintings from the infancy of the human race. BERNARD M. SCULLY

#### SYMBOLS OF CHRIST

By Damasus Winzen, O.S.B. Kenedy. 99p.  
\$2.50

This little book aims at awakening Catholics to the rich treasures stored up in the symbols of Christ found in the Bible. These symbols abound in both the Old and New Testaments, and they have been taken up by the Church for use in her liturgy. Even beyond that usage these symbols can often be traced among pagan or primitive peoples, and so they throw light on the bonds binding all mankind to the Creator.

Ten symbols from each of the Testaments are briefly, but clearly, explained. Two pages suffice for some of the explanations, while others are extended to five or six pages. In all the image of Christ is made to shine forth in the light of the New Testament. In this way there is made manifest the solid continuity of the older revelation with its fulfillment in the new. Since many of the symbols can also be discovered in pagan practices or in the customs of ancient nations, it is clear that their roots lie in human nature itself.

Christ is the Living Symbol and in Him and through Him the whole universe is made to fit in with the infinite wisdom of God who fashioned it. Christians, incorporated in Christ, become in their turn living symbols, fitting material things to God, seeing God in these things and elevating them to praise Him.

With this book as guide Catholics will be able to live in closer contact with our Lord and to participate more intimately in the ceremonies of Catholic worship.

WILLIAM A. DOWD, S.J.

#### ...For Special Tastes...

That is a rather misleading head, for the very first book we start off with is one that will appeal to everybody, though the price (\$10) will put it beyond the reach of perhaps a majority. It is a magnificent art book on *Mary, the Mother of God* (Regnery). It contains almost every great painting of our Lady that has ever been done; there are 132 plates in the book, 20 of them in color, each with critical notes. The introduction is by Henri Ghéon. The whole production is stunning and devotional.

Two other art books that will appeal to the expert rather than to the amateur are *The Selective Eye* (Random House. \$7.95) and *The Eye of Man*

(Devin-Adair. \$10). The first is a selection of the best from the famous European art magazine *L'Oeil* and, in addition to hundreds of plates, 48 of them in color, contains articles on the most famous of the modern artists. The text may help many to make sense of such men as Picasso, Dufy, etc. The second book, by Selden Rodman concentrates more on text, and tends rather to puncture famous reputations than to explain them. It insists on communication in art and deplores "private" artistry.

In introducing *African Music from the Sources of the Nile*, by Joseph Kyagambiddwa (Praeger. \$4.50), Rev. John LaFarge, S.J., says:

This is the fruit of a deliberately planned effort to preserve, before it is too late, a precious cultural heritage . . . it represents a mighty step forward in forging a spiritual link between our two continents.

This will point up the importance of the book, which is of special interest to musicologists.

Three picture books interpret for us the world we live in. Two are magnificent in sweep and design. They are *The World We Live In*, by the Editorial Staff of *Life* and Lincoln Barnett (Simon and Schuster. \$13.50), which, in typical *Life* fashion, covers everything, with never a question mark to indicate that some of the "scientific facts" are at least debatable; and *Year's Pictorial History of America* (Simon and Schuster. \$9.95), which contains a magnificent plenty of pictures and photos depicting us from Columbus to today. Probably nobody will read the text, but anybody can spend hours—not unfruitfully, either—in poring over the pictorial record.

The third of these books is *Tales of the Mississippi*, by Ray Samuel, Leonard V. Huber and Warren C. Ogden (Hastings House. \$7.50). It covers, in text and pictures, the history of the river and its legends, and includes factual matters such as attempts at flood control. It is a specialized section of Americana.

The titles of the next three books will tell all that's needed to alert those interested. A *Short History of Philosophy*, translated by Edward A. Maziarz, C. PP. S., from the original work by F.-J. Thonnard, A.A., is published by Desclée (\$6.50). Joseph T. Shiple edits for the Philosophical Library a *Dictionary of Early English* (\$10), which carries a graceful introduction by Mark Van Doren. The 1955 edition of the official handbook *Britain* (British

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R. W. DALY is associate professor of English history and government at the U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis.

#### RED PLUSH AND BLACK BREAD

By Marguerite Higgins. Doubleday. 256p.  
\$4

Miss Higgins is now in Moscow on a fellowship for an extended stay. This book is the result of her first visit, which occurred in the summer of 1955 and spanned ten weeks and 13,500 miles. It begins with the sentence:

This book is an eyewitness account of Russia as I saw it and Soviet policy as I have experienced it and heard it analyzed by scholars and diplomats, particularly those on the scene in Moscow.

The author is reputedly a charming woman and no doubt a very substantial cut above the "sob-sister" type, but as a Pulitzer prizewinner for work such as her reporting of the Korean War, she will no doubt in time wish that the material in this book had been left in its first form of publication—as articles syndicated by the New York *Herald Tribune*, which is fortunate to have her on its staff.

Articles in newspapers are perishable. Books have a way of enduring whether good or bad. Material that seemed brilliant in the transitory medium of newsprint seems superficial when placed between hard covers and solemnized by the indication of its catalog entry in the Library of Congress.

So it is with *Red Plush and Black Bread*. Adeptly, clearly written, it remains in the "Gee whiz" category, the "I was there and here's what it's all about" type. Unfortunately, where we could not expect a foreigner in ten weeks of dashing about the United States to produce anything more substantial than impressions about us and our way of life, neither can we expect one—not even a Pulitzer prizewinning reporter—to succeed in a similar effort in Russia.

On the credit side of the ledger, however, we can hope that Miss Higgins has through this book released the compulsion to set down in black and white the enthusiasms of first discovery. If her record as a reporter is any indication, she will easily weather the acidulous criticism of her colleagues who are veterans on the Moscow beat.

Then, after her present stay in Russia has ended, we can hope for a solid book written by an outstanding reporter instead of *Red Plush and Black Bread*, in which that reporter unfortunately assumed the unfamiliar guise of a sciolistic, pontificating columnist.

R. W. DALY

## FILMS

THE ROSE TATTOO, among other things, embodies to a fascinating degree two often misunderstood axioms of film regulation. The movie is based on a play by Tennessee Williams that was ultimately very offensive. For film purposes a little restraint has been imposed on the playwright, who wrote his own scenario, with the result that the movie is much better than the play. Though all-out proponents of freedom of the screen fail to appreciate the point, it is a fact that blatantly uninhibited dialogue and situations, while they may be reportorially true to life, usually make for bad art. Instead of conveying truth they actually draw a curtain of disconnected shocks between the audience and reality.

The second axiom, which almost appears to contradict the first, is roughly that the manner of handling is overwhelmingly more important than subject matter in determining the suitability of anything for screen presentation. *The Rose Tattoo* is probably the earthiest film ever to come out of Hollywood. In addition it contains a good deal of material that would have been most offensive given less skillful and perceptive handling and must have looked very dubious in the cold print of a shooting script.

The producers and the Production Code Administration—which is, justifiably and from bitter experience, less than sanguine about accepting potential artistry of treatment as a valid reason for okaying a questionable screen play—arrived at a mutually satisfactory disposition of their problems.

The greatest single asset in the film which occasioned this lengthy preamble is leading lady Anna Magnani for whom, though she never played it on the stage, Williams wrote the play. Her role is that of a passionate Sicilian woman in an American Gulf Coast community, who is mourning the memory of her dead husband to the total disregard of her own nature and her other obligations in life and under a grave misapprehension as to the man's true character.

In the course of the film she undergoes a series of violent shocks. A clowning suitor (Burt Lancaster), with a striking physical resemblance to her husband, appears on the scene. The adolescent daughter (Marisa Pavan)

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she has overprotected but failed to guide or understand falls in love with a sailor (Ben Cooper) who, fortunately, is not at all like the sailors conjured up in the mother's suspicious mind. And lastly, the woman learns that her idolized husband had been flagrantly unfaithful. Under the impact of these unsettling developments, the heroine's behavior becomes even more erratic than before but gradually she accepts them and comes to terms with life.

The actress' understanding and projection of this (by movie standards) unprecedented female is electrifying. She conveys each facet—religious faith and superstition, passion and sense of propriety, earthiness and gentility, ignorance and wisdom—of a complex personality so that it assumes its proper perspective in the character as a whole.

Some of the rest of the film nearly keeps pace with the leading lady, notably the sensitive direction of Daniel Mann and performances of the young sweethearts. Lancaster disappoints by seeming merely an intelligent actor responding to direction rather than playing with conviction. And the picture is deficient in a backdrop of normalcy to serve as a foil for its mercurial heroine. But for those interested in fine acting Magnani's performance is one of the greatest ever recorded on film. (Paramount) MOIRA WALSH

## THEATRE

THE MATCHMAKER, presented at the Royale by The Theatre Guild and David Merrick, is one of the zaniest farces that ever exploded in a theatre. If you are looking for sheer buffoonery that will provide enough rib-rattling laughs to shake down a heavy holiday dinner, this is it.

Imagine Shaw writing *Man and Superman* solely for laughs and you will envisage the story line of Thornton Wilder's farce sight unseen. It's the familiar story, probably first told by Goldsmith in *She Stoops to Conquer*, and later popularized by Shaw, of a man chasing a woman until she catches him. The leading characters are a rich widower and a widow who was his deceased wife's intimate friend. Electing herself a committee of one to assist the widower in making a good second marriage, she has inside information of the eligible ladies he has in mind, and uses the advantage of her position to knock

off the competition, winning him for herself.

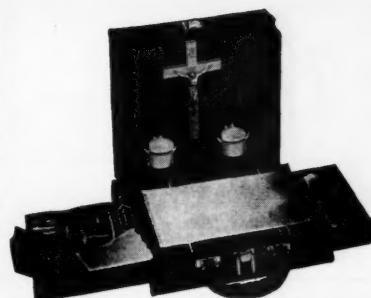
The formula may be Goldsmith's but the undulations from delicious drollery to low comedy are Wilder's personal contribution to the gaiety of the season. A trio of superlative comedians, spearheaded by Ruth Gordon, make the story transferred from writing to performance a riot of hilarity. Miss Gordon is a scream as the widow whose intelligence is masked by a facade of nitwit mannerisms. Loring Smith, the perpetually indignant father in *John Loves Mary*, is still funnier as the perpetually suspicious widower. Eileen Herlie, imported from London, is apparently an experienced hand at projecting Tenth Avenue comedy in Park Avenue style.

The action moves from Yonkers to New York in the 1880's, an era that allows Tanya Moiseiwitsch's imagination full rein in designing period settings and costumes. Your reviewer, who rarely ventures into the realm of prophecy, predicts without hesitation that *The Matchmaker*—future productions unseen—is the outstanding comedy of the season.

THE LARK. Of all the colossi of history, the Maid of Orleans has become the most challenging character of the modern stage. Every first-rate actress wants to interpret the role, as every actor wants a crack at Hamlet, with the result that only the most talented actresses ever get a chance at it and the character is never played badly. It's almost as if a special grace protects the role from inept interpretation.

A more radiant performance than Julie Harris is giving in the Jean Anouilh drama at the Longacre is difficult, one is tempted to say impossible, to imagine. Her portrayal of Joan from pious peasant lass who hears angels speaking to the martyr and future saint is magnificent. Joan's was a mercurial character that could change from humility to boldness as the need of the moment required. Her one trait that never changed was her steadfastness in faith. Miss Harris' imaginative portraiture of the saint is an unforgettable experience.

Kermit Bloomgarden, the producer, has assembled a cast that includes Boris Karloff, Joseph Wiseman, Christopher Plummer and Theodore Bikel, who handle their chores with the competence expected of such experienced troupers. Michael Higgins, who isn't featured in the billing, is eloquent as



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Brother Ladvenu, who cannot speak against the weight of ecclesiastical authority but protests against Joan's conviction with the slope of his shoulders and the drop of his chin.

Joseph Anthony's direction maintains the dignity of the subject and Jo Mielziner's austere setting and sensitive lighting provide an elastic frame and appropriate atmosphere for the drama. Alvin Colt's costumes are plausible replicas of the apparel worn by Joan's contemporaries.

The play was translated and adapted by Lillian Hellman and one cannot be sure how much the original script has been altered. It can be safely assumed that whatever changes Miss Hellman made were improvements, for the drama faithfully reflects the mystery and glory of Joan's career, the tragedy of her trial and the integrity of her character. And Joan is a character we can never see too often nor observe from too many points of view.

THEOPHILUS LEWIS

## THE WORD

*She brought forth a Son, her first-born, whom she wrapped in His swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger* (Luke 2:7; Gospel from first Mass of Christmas).

It is sometimes said that Christmas belongs to children. This may or may not be true. But if there is one person to whom the holy festival of the Christ-Mass does belong in a genuinely special sense, that person is the plain, unpretentious Christian layman.

When the ordinary Catholic layman kneels in his parish church and looks once more at the well-remembered, well-loved Crib, he may very justly feel an unwanted touch of inner warmth and comfort. For one thing, he *understands* the sacred event which is thus represented before him, as, perhaps, he does not really grasp various other religious truths. Moreover, the scene he gazes upon is familiar, not merely in the flat sense that he saw it last year, but in the much more exciting and meaningful sense that he sees it every day. For what the layman finds in the Christmas picture is what he finds at home: a family; a plain family.

By every right the ordinary man may see himself in Joseph. The plaster figure standing protectively near the manger

makes Joseph look clean and fresh and ecstatically happy. But the Catholic layman knows that the real Joseph was grimy from the road, and weary with travel and worry, and keenly sorry that he could not make better provision for Mary and the Baby—and that he was extremely happy just the same. The earnest layman recognizes that strange, confused joy as well as he recognizes the grime and the worry and the dead weariness.

In Mary and the Infant the Catholic layman sees *his* wife and *his* child. He understands quite well that Mary and her Son carried no particular earthly weight (in any sense) on the first Christmas night, that no one round about, saving a few shabby shepherds who themselves were nobodies, paid any attention to yet another new mother and another new baby. But these two were exceedingly important to Joseph and to the most high God, as any man's wife and child are important to him and to the most high God.

The sincere, hardworking Christian layman may recognize himself in the shepherds, too. They were possibly rough fellows, these, the hearty, rather ragged poor men who had to be working while men with better jobs snored in their warm beds. But it was these nameless herdsmen, and not the rich and influential, who were invited to the birthday party of God become a baby.

The ordinary Catholic layman may seem an unimpressive sort of fellow, and maybe he drives a truck or a taxi half through the night, or toils in a factory, or politely sweats in an office all through the day. But as he kneels at the Christ-Mass, he may be sure that he is there by an invitation so special that it is not always extended to the most important V.I.P.'s in this world.

The good layman may even see himself in the Infant who rests so lightly on the manger straw. After all, this divine Child is a very human child, like any other. He will "live the long slow hours of man." He will work a trade and earn a slender living. He will make acquaintance with pain, will shed His share of tears, will die. True, this small One even now is prophet, priest and king, as He is God the Lord. But He is also a man. Like any man. Like the Christian layman who loves Him so simply and so well.

No need, really, to wish the Christian, Catholic layman a joyous and most holy Christmas. His true name alone guarantees both his merriment and his holiness. He is Christ's man.

VINCENT P. McCORRY, S.J.

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ORRY, S.J.

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